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FOREIGN ITEMS.

INCIDENTAL DISSUASIVES FROM WAR.—England is full of Life Assurance Associations; and one of the most useful among them, the Temperance Life Assurance Institution, has adopted the provision, that, “if any person whose life is assured by the Institution, shall enter the Army, or Navy, or Preventive-service, his policy shall be void; and, if any member shall be convicted of giving or accepting a challenge to fight, he shall be excluded, and all his interest forfeited.” Men begin to understand the practical bearings of peace and war on their own interests.

ENLISTMENT OF CHILDREN FROM THE ALMS-HOUSES OF ENGLAND INTO THE ARMY AND NAVY.—The attention of the friends of peace and humanity was some time ago drawn to this subject by some startling facts. Petitions were sent to Parliament for an investigation; and returns to a parliamentary call for “the names of all the children who have been removed from Union Houses into the Army and Navy, whether by consent of their parents or not,” give 271 as the sum total—132 into the Army, and 139 into the Navy, mainly between the ages of 10 and 15, and nearly all from those counties most conveniently situated for the savage business. From London, however, and sixty-one Unions, no returns have been received.

We will quote, in illustration of these outrages, a petition, dated April 12, 1844:

“The Petition of the undersigned, Louisa Jackson and John Jackson, the mother and step-father of Frederick Jackson, a boy, now in the depot of the 31st Regiment of foot in Chatham-barracks, humbly sheweth,—

“That your petitioners, being in very straitened circumstances, the aforesaid Frederick Jackson, their son, was permitted by the parochial authorities of St. Marylebone, after due inquiry into the case, to remain an inmate of their workhouse; and was allowed the privilege of visiting your petitioners at certain times. That the said youth was, on or about the 16th of December last, enlisted, with six other lads, and sworn to unlimited service of the Queen, as a soldier in the 31st regiment of foot, *without the knowledge or consent of the petitioners*, who consider themselves greatly aggrieved thereby; and that the youth was at that time only 13 years and about 11 days old, as will appear from the memorandums attached to this Petition. That, during several weeks after the day of enlistment, the customary visits of the mother to the workhouse, or of the child to his parents, were interrupted by her confinement and subsequent illness; the father being at the same time employed in a brewery, where his services were required every day of the week. That on the earliest suitable opportunity, the nurse was sent to the workhouse to ask permission for the lad to come home for a few hours; which application was refused, without any explanation of what had occurred; and that on several subsequent Sundays this application was repeated, both verbally and by letter, with a similar result. That the mother being at length partially restored to health, applied, in person, to be allowed to see her boy, and then discovered, to her great astonishment and distress, that he had been for several weeks a soldier in Chatham barracks! That the mother, then, by letter, addressed to Major Spence, and the father, by a journey to Chatham, endeavored to obtain the restoration of the lad to his family, but without success. On the contrary, that officer has intimated in his letter addressed to the Secretary of the Marylebone Guardians, bearing date, March 15, that ‘the enlistment is conclusive,’ and that a sum of twenty pounds (\$100) will be required to purchase his discharge. That your petitioners are in very humble circumstances, and have three other children dependent on them for support; and that the parochial authorities of St. Marylebone, have declined to render them the redress they now seek. Your petitioners, therefore, implore your Lordships to interpose on behalf of an injured family, and to take such measures as may be best calculated to effect the restoration of this child to his anxious parents.”